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ABSTRACT

This paper introduces students to lesser known and traveled parts of Mexico. The text is intended to accompany a Power Point presentation that traces the trip a Fulbright-Hays group took through Mexico, highlighting places of cultural and historical interest. The paper includes a list of slide notes and realia for each slide to be shared with the class. (EH)

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ED 422 221

Paper for Fulbright-Hays Summer Seminar 1997

Mexico: Challenges and Opportunities in Education in the 21st Century

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My project **Un viaje por Mexico** is designed to introduce the lesser known and traveled parts of Mexico to the students. Through a PowerPoint presentation I will trace the trip that our Fulbright group took through Mexico highlighting various places of interest culturally and historically. I hope to enlighten my students about other regions and cities in Mexico besides the typical tourist areas. Through this presentation they will come to know and understand Mexico better and to have a different perspective than that which the media often presents in our country.

I have included the slide that would appear on the screen and then the information the I would give as notes with the slide. I have also included the realia that I would share with the class according to each slide. I describe the video scenes that would accompany the presentation at various times.

Ciudad Juarez/ El Paso

Universidad de El Paso

We started our trip at the University of El Paso in Texas. The University is a branch of the very large university system in Texas. It lies on the border of Texas and Mexico and its sister city in Mexico is Ciudad Juarez. The University has a special interest in border studies and even has its own center completely devoted to the study of border issues and problems. The university has a large population of Mexican students that travel from Ciudad Juarez every day to attend classes.

From El Paso one can walk across the border to Mexico - or drive- after going through passport/immigration controls at the bridge. It is relatively easy for U.S. citizens to go into Mexico, however the reverse is not true.

Las colonias

Las colonias is the word that is used in Texas and on the border to describe a public housing project. In very unpleasant terms many would call the colonias the slums or the ghetto. The mexicans and the mexican americans there live in sub human standards often without clean running water. One might say that they are in Mexico and that it is their problem. However several mexicans cross the border and work at businesses and factories in the U.S. for below minimum wage and then return to live in the colonia every day. Our business community is taking advantage of the cheap labor without being responsible or concerned about the health and welfare of its employees.

La Frontera

The border between the U.S. and Mexico is the Rio Grande which runs along the border of Texas, New Mexico, Arizona and California. The border area is unique in many ways. Several view the border as neither Mexico nor the U.S.. It is an area where Mexicans are not seen as "real Mexicans " due to the paramount influence of the U.S. and where the mexican americans are not viewed as Americans due to the evidence of the existence of the Mexican culture there and their attachment to that culture. They are a group of people all alone.

Video I would show the video of the University of El Paso and the border control areas to show them what crossing the border really means. I would then also show them the contrast between El Paso and Ciudad Juarez.

Chihuahua

Paquime

Paquime is the only archeological site of its kind in northern Mexico. The site contains up to seven story high rammed-earth walls, T-shaped doors, an inter-city potable water system which came from a nearby spring through stone-lined canals, ceremonial mounds and ball courts.

Paquime has a common background with the desert cultures of what is now the southwestern U.S.. The site is dated to approximately 1150 A.D.. The original site is believed to have covered over 400 acres. During the excavation many interesting artifacts were found like sea shells, skeletons of tropical birds and ceramic pottery. Lead acheologists believe that Paquime was an important trading center for the tribes then living in what is now the southwestern U.S. and Mexico's pacific coast.

Creel

Creel is a very small town in the state of Chihuahua. There is one main street with several stores selling various arts and crafts made by the Tarahumara indians. While visiting Creel we traveled to the outskirts of the town to visit "las cascadas" or some of the waterfalls. We also saw several Tarahumara dwellings and spoke with them about

how they live in Mexico. We visited one of the schools of that rural area and we also saw one of the first missions of that area.

La barranca del cobre

We traveled through the copper canyon, as it is known in English, by train. The Copper canyon rivals the Grand Canyon in beauty. It is a natural wonder. We stopped in Divisidero which is a small town in about the middle of the canyon. We departed the train to enjoy the breathtaking view of the the open canyon.

La casa de Pancho Villa

The house of the legendary villain/hero of the Mexican Revolution is now a museum of the Mexican Revolution. The museum contains several pictures of Pancho Villa and it also traces the stages of the revolution from the early movements until the end. They display several flags and original documents and also many army pieces and weapons. The museum has the 1922 Dodge in which Pancho Villa was shot in 1923, complete with bullet holes. A guard there was nice enough to give us a personal explanation of the event and even pointed out the bullet holes to us.

Video I have extensive video of the ruins of Paquime, Creel , the Tarahumara Indians and the Copper Canyon. We were not allowed to film in the museum but I did film outside. I will show the video after giving the information about the various places.

It will especially be beneficial when explaining how the indians actually live. It is often difficult for students to imagine poverty. It will be very evident to them after seeing the video.

Guadalajara

Centro historico

Guadalajara is Mexico's second largest city and is sometimes thought of as the most Mexican city in Mexico. Several typical Mexican traditons had their origin here including one of the most famous- el mariachi.

This city is very lucky to have more than one lovely plaza. The Plaza de Armas is filled with benches and a French made iron bandstand where concerts are given on a regular basis. This plaza faces the Palacio del Gobierno which houses the famous Orozco murals. The cathedral is nearby and is unique due to the tile work on the towers. There are very few cathedrals in Latin America with this kind of work. Walking through the Plaza Libertad, another lovely square, one passes the Palacio de Justicia, the first convent in Guadalajara and then faces the Teatro Degollado a beautiful neoclassic opera house.

Mercado Libertad

This market is said to be one of the largest in Latin America, and it has been used as a market since the 1500's. The gigantic covered market is a great place to buy almost anything but especially leather, pottery, baskets and other typical Mexican handicrafts. The market is also full of any kind of fruit and vegetable that one could imagine. One could sit and watch all day long as the people come and go, buying and selling.

El Mariachi

The mariachis in Guadalajara are so popular that they even have their own plaza, the Plaza de los Mariachis. Every evening the mariachis dressed in their colorful outfits stroll around the plaza playing and singing. They play for money or they will play for free. When we visited the plaza, we requested a few songs and then we also offered the marichis some money for their time and effort. They were very entertaining and enjoyable to listen to.

Tlaquepaque

Tlaquepaque is basically known as a shopping village. It is full of shops that produce some of the best pottery and crafts made in Mexico. There are vendors of jewelry on every corner. The town is also famous for El Parian, the circular buiding in the town center, where mariachis offer serenades to nearby cafe dwellers.

Video I filmed extensively in Guadalajara in the city center. I also taped our tour guides giving us the information about the city. I have several scenes form the market, the mariachis and the village of Tlaquepaque.

Guanajato

Centro historico

Guanajuato is considered by many to be one of the most beautiful city in America. It owes its fame and fortune to the gold and silver that was discovered by the Spaniards many years ago. This allowed them to build the fine town houses, magnificent haciendas

and romantic plazas that populate Guanajuato. In the churches, one can see some of the best examples of barroque and Churrigueresque architecture in the New World.

Guanajuato is like Europe in many ways. The city is full of museums and lovely plazas like the ones all over Europe. One can enjoy the plaza, El jardin de la Union or La plaza de la Paz , throughout the entire year. They are surrounded by beautiful houses and colonial palaces.

Universidad de Guanajuato

The University of Guanajuato was founded in 1732 by the Society of Jesus, or the Jesuits, a Catholic religious order. By authorization of King Felipe V of Spain, it was officially recognized on the 20th of August in 1744. In 1867 it became a State College and in 1945 it became the University of Guanajuato. The University contains 23 different schools, 6 research institutes and 4 research centers. Approximately 18,000 students are enrolled.

Dolores Hidalgo

Dolores Hidalgo is a small colonial town with a plaza in the center with the cathedral facing the plaza . It also has several colonial buildings around the plaza. One might ask why is it any different from any other small colonial town in Mexico. This town has a special place in Mexican history. It was from the steps of this cathedral that Father Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla gave his famous Grito de Dolores which started the

Mexican Revolution. He made that cry some time during the night of September 15-16, 1810 and rang the church bells to gather the villagers together. Each year at 11:00 p.m. on September 15 that cry is repeated. "Long live Our Lady of Guadalupe!" "Death to bad government!" Mexico's independence day is September 16.

Fr. Hidalgo's house is in Dolores Hidalgo also. It contains many of his artifacts and many from the Revolution. Fr. Hidalgo was brutally killed by the government shortly after the revolution started. His house is now a museum which honors him and all that he accomplished for the Mexican people.

Atotonilco

From Dolores Hidalgo Fr. Hidalgo marched toward Mexico with his 50,000 men. On the way they stopped at Atotonilco, a small village. From the church Fr. Hidalgo took a banner of the Lady of Guadalupe to carry with them throughout their journey. The banner since then has been one of the most important symbols of the revolution and of Mexico.

Video I will show the video of the town of Dolores Hidalgo, the plaza , the steps and the house of Fr. Hidalgo. I will also show the church in Atotonilco.

San Miguel de Allende

Centro historico

San Miguel de Allende is a colonial town. It was founded in 1542 and has been declared a national monument. The plaza is one of the prettiest in Mexico. Since most of the buildings date from the colonial era, the town retains a special type of charm. Many

of the shops and restaurants in the center of town are actually mansions dating from that era. La Parroquia, or the parish church, dominates the town square. It is particularly impressive at night with all of the lights.

Ignacio Allende

Also facing the plaza is el Museo de la Casa de Allende. This was the birthplace of the famous independence leader Ignacio Allende from whom the town derives part of its name. Ignacio Allende worked with Father Hidalgo and Josefa Dominguez to achieve independence for Mexico. Allende was captured not long after the fight began and was then later executed.

Video I filmed throughout the town of San Miguel de Allende including all of the centro historico area. I have video of the plaza during the day and night so that they can see all of the activity that occurs in a typical Mexican plaza.

Queretero

Centro historico

Queretero was founded as new hispanic city on the 25th of July 1531. The city was given the title of "the very noble and royal city". The arquitecture in the city dates to the 18th century. The plazas here are incredible, absolutely lovely-filled with flowers, trees, benches and cafes. The one peculiar thing about the main plaza is that there is no cathedral facing the plaza. The citizens were more concerned about having a beautiful

city than about putting the cathedral on the plaza. We later learned that there was even a contest to see who could have the biggest and best house on the plaza. The House of Ecala located right on the plaza won the contest.

El Acueducto

This aqueduct was constructed from 1726 to 1735 by the city's benefactor, Antonio de Urrutia y Arana, the Marquis de la Vallar del Aguila. The Marquis was also the protector of the newly established Capuchin nuns in Queretero. They told him that the city did not have any clean water. The Marquis designed the great aqueduct and the water was carried over 74 arches. In 1738 the project was completed with the building of the numerous public fountains around the city where people could come and draw their water.

La casa de la Corregidora

This large palace was finished in 1770 and it was originally designed to be the Royal Houses and Prisons. It acquired historical importance because it became the home of the Corregidor, or mayor, Don Miguel Dominguez and his wife Dona Josefa Ortiz de Dominguez from 1801 to 1810. Dona Josefa was very active in the secret society that planned the beginning of the Mexican Revolution in 1910. The message that was sent to Fr. Hidalgo to warn them that their plans had been discovered was sent by Dona Josefa.

El Cerro de las Campanas

This is a small hill situated on the west side of the city and it owes its name to the fact that when the rocks covering it strike each other, the sound produced resembles that

of bells. This hill is a landmark because the Emperor Maximilian established his general headquarters here to plan the strategy for the decisive battle of his empire. His Imperial army lost and he surrendered his sword at the foot of the hill. Maximilian was later executed on the hill by a firing squad. Today there is a chapel in honor of the ex-emperor on the hill. In the center there is a monumental statue to honor Benito Juarez, the president of Mexico during the time of the Emperor Maximilian.

Video I have extensive video of Queretero. I include all of the places mentioned plus other parts of the city. We visited the university and had a wonderful tour.

Cuernavaca

La plaza

There are two plazas in the center of Cuernavaca. The smaller and more formal one is Jardin Juarez. The larger one, seen here, is the Jardin de los Heroes or it is also called the Plaza de Armas. They are both filled with trees and flowers. One can find vendors there selling everything from balloons to various arts and crafts from nearby villages. There are often bands that play in the plazas providing entertainment for the afternoon strollers.

Museo de Cuauhnahuac in the Cortes Palace

Cuauhnahuac is the original name of Cuernavaca and it means "at the edge of the forest". When the Spaniards arrived they heard Cuernavaca and hence the name of the town. The town museum is in the house of the most famous conquistador Hernan Cortes.

In the museum one will find several valuable pieces from the early Mexican civilizations. There are also exhibits from the colonial time and some objects of the great revolutionary Emiliano Zapata. One of the biggest attractions in the museum is a Diego Rivera mural that cronicles the history of Cuernavaca from the Spanish conquest to the era of Zapata. It is bréathtaking.

Emiliano Zapata

Emiliano Zapata was born in the state of Morelos. He is probably one of the best known revolutionaries in all of Mexicna history. He was instrumental in trying to change the hacienda system and returning the land of the rich to the original owners, the indians and the mestizos. His main goal was to get land for the people. He refused to stop fighting until the president distributed the land fairly. When this was not done, he issued his own plan of land reform. He fought for the people but he was eventually murdered in 1919. His name lives on in the Zapatista group that exists today. They, too, are still fighting for land reform.

Video Cuernavaca was not my favorite place but I did capture the beauty of the city by filming some of the gardens for which the city is famous. I have the plazas and also the museum on video. We had a private tour and I was able to tape the Diego Rivera mural.

Puebla

La universidad

Puebla was founded as a safe spot between the capital and the coast. It was know as a city of the wealthy and has maintained some of that wealth throughtout the city. It is rich in beautiful architecture from the churches to the private homes.

We spent most of our time at the University of Puebla, or Universidad de las Americas, as it is called there. It is similar to any American university. The campus is large with several modern buildings. The library and computer centers are state of the art. We spoke with several students and toured most of the campus. They even have a football team which is highly unusual in any other country except the US. They don't play many games but nonetheless it is still popular on campus.

Cacaxtla-ruinas

The biggest attraction at Cacaxtla are the murals seen here. The murals, showing Maya warriors in red, blue, black, yellow, and white, were discovered in 1975. Since then more murals and eight construction phases have been discovered at the site. The archeological site has been influenced by many groups including the Mayas, the Toltecas and those from Teotihuacan. It seems like Cacaxtla was a crossroads for merchants, astonomers and others in general area. It is a well preserved site and very different from other sites in Mexico due to the influence of so many other groups.

Video I taped the entire campus and several of the students in action. I also have the main plaza and several of the shoppong streets in the city center. I was able to film some of the ruins and the colorful murals at Cacaxtla.

Taxco

El pueblo

Taxco is a town on a hill among hills. There are spectacular views from almost all locations in the city, however it is not famous for its views. It is famous for its silver. Tourists visit from all over the country to buy silver in Taxco. The silver mines were first worked during the time of Cortes and then were revived in the 1930's. There are over 180 silver shops in the city but it seems like a thousand when one is walking the streets. Silver is everywhere. The pieces are unique and show superior craftsmanship.

Taxco also has several quaint plazas and churches. It is a great town for tourists to shop and to see a lovely, picturesque Mexican town.

Video We had a spectacular view of the city from our hotel and we thoroughly explored the city. It is full of narrow streets and flower covered balconies, not to mention all of the silver.

Jalapa

El Museo de Antropologia

Jalapa is probably most famous for its Museo de Antropologia. It is second only to the museum in Mexico City. The Museum is dedicated to highlighting the Indian groups on the Gulf Coast, particularly the Olmecas. Upon entering the museum, the first thing that one sees is one of the giant Olmec heads carved in stone. There are some others throughout the museum and all are equally impressive. This museum houses the

largest collection of Olmec heads in the world. They also have many other valuable artifacts and models of ancient cities.

The haciendas

The word hacienda has been adopted into the English language to mean a large house with extensive grounds and usually some type of agricultural product as the main source of income. This is all true, however, the word hacienda in Mexico means much more than that. The hacienda was a system of agriculture that lasted over 300 years. It structured rural life and economic development in Mexico for many years. The system is complex and controversial because it did cause growth in Mexico but it was at the expense of almost slave labor by the indians and the mestizos. It had a great impact on the history and actual way of life in Mexico today.

Video I paid a small fee to be able to film in the museum because I thought that it would be very worthwhile for my students. The objects are incredible and ones that the students may never have another opportunity to view, especially the Olmec heads. I was also fascinated by the hacienda that we visited and filmed in length all of the buildings and all of the explinations the the owner gave us. The hacienda system is important in understanding the history of Mexico.

Veracruz

Centro historico

Hernan Cortes landed here in 1519 and since that time Veracruz has been Mexico's principal port. Veracruz has an interesting combination of cultures: the indian,

the european and the african/carribean. It is always very warm there and the city is usually bustling with activity.

San Juan de Ulua

This was originally a fortress built to protect against pirate invasion. It was converted into a prison and later housed Benito Juarez , one on Mexico's most revered presidents.

Fort of Santiago

This structure was also built to protect the city from pirates. This fortification is all that is left of the old city walls. One can walk through and see the old quarters of the soldiers and the canons and weapons that they used.

Carnaval

Veracruz is the Rio de Janeiro of Mexico. There a parades with magnificent floats and live entertainment. The festivities include dancing and parties all day long for the three days before Ash Wednesday. Mexicans come from all over the country to celebrate Carnaval in Veracruz.

Video I taped the port area and also all of the places mentioned here. I also included some of the Carribean flavor of the city by taping some of the dancing and music that goes on in the main plaza at night.

Mexico

Teotihuacan

Teotihuacan means "the place where the gods were born" . The ruins are some of the best in all of Mexico. The most notable structure in the city is the Pyramid of the Sun, what you see here, which they started to build around 100B.C. Teotihuacan was the dominant city in Mesoamerica during that time covering eight square miles with its pyramids and palaces. We have the remaining buildings but we don't know much other information about the city. We know very little about their language, where they came from, or why they left the city in A.D. 700.

El Museo de Antropolgia

This museum stands alone for its splendor . There are two floors in the museum. The first floor is dedicated to the history and pre-historic days up until the present. They include maps and models of the cities before the arrival of Cortes. It is here that one finds the Aztec calendar stone wheel among other priceless artifacts telling us about how the indians lived. The second floor contains the ethnographic rooms where we can actually see the way that the early Mexicans lived.

El Palacio Nacional

The Palacio Nacional is like the White House of Mexico. It was the former palace of Cortes and was also built on important Aztec sites. The Palace is probably most famous because of the Diego Rivera murals that decorate the entire second floor. I have included one of them here and we will see many more later on the video

El zocalo y la Catedral

The Zocalo, or the town square or main plaza, is just what the name implies. It is the most important gathering place for everyone in the city. Since Mexico was the capital of New Spain it was constructed to be the largest and the best. It is the center of the life of the city. It is surrounded by all of the most important buildings in the city, the Palacio Nacional and the Cathedral.

The impressive Catedral Metropolitano towers over the Zocalo. It was started in 1573 and built one the site of one of the most important Aztec temples. It was common for the conquistadores to build their churches on the holy ground of the Aztecs since they could use the stones to build their new churches and it also made it easier for later conversion. The Cathedral was finished in1667 and it has five naves and fourteen chapels.

El Palacio de Bellas Artes

El Palacio de Bellas Artes is a spectacular theater that is covered with Italian marble on the outside. One of the main attractions at the theater is the Ballet Folklorico which is presented every Wednesday and Sunday evenings. We went to see it and it was fabulous. In addition to being a concert hall, the theater also has art shows. On the third floor there are the murals by Rivera, Orozco, and Siqueiros.

Xochimilco

Xochimilco is best known for its canals and floating gardens. The canals have survived from the civilization of the Aztecs and the name means"flower cultivators". They built the gardens on the lake by filling them with fertile lake bottom mud. They are

narrow islands with canals on all sides. The canals are filled with colorful boats that hold 10 to 15 people. The guide gives you a tour through the canals until you arrive at the shopping center of the canals. On the journey, one encounters all types of vendors from jewelry to blankets to tamales. It was a memorable experience.

El Castillo de Chapultepec

The castle sits on a high hill in Mexico City and offers a wonderful view of the entire city. It was built on the site of a former Aztec fortress since the site is a perfect location to see what is going on in the city. The present palace was built in the 1780's. Emperor Maximilian and Empress Carlota lived there during the French occupation. Today the castle houses several historical artifacts and also murals by Orozco and Siqueiros.

Video I have video of all of the places that I mention in the report and will include them in my presentation and use them as supplemental material also.

I used several of the pamphets, books, material that they gave us and my own notes from the trip to complete the project.